



News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONSORTIUM FORMED TO DEVELOP JOINT UNMANNED COMBAT AIR SYSTEMS COMMON OPERATING SYSTEM

The Joint Unmanned Combat Air Systems (J-UCAS) program announced the establishment of the Consortium to develop a Common Operating System (COS) for J-UCAS. The Consortium's members include Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (Laurel, Md.), Boeing Co. (St. Louis, Mo.), and Northrop Grumman Systems Corp. (San Diego, Calif.). Articles of Collaboration for the Consortium were signed February 14.

The signing of the Articles of Collaboration by each of the Consortium's members and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) enabled the initiation of Consortium activities. These Articles define a management structure for accomplishing COS development. They also describe the formal processes for handling dispute resolution, protecting proprietary information, and managing members' intellectual property.

J-UCAS will employ its COS to integrate the system's major components (e.g., air vehicles, sensors, weapons, communications, and human crews), providing the necessary software and services that enable system functionality and provide it broad operational flexibility. The COS' open, non-proprietary architecture based on industry standards will allow the Consortium to develop a capability that is operationally flexible and affordable, capable of supporting J-UCAS and future defense programs.

The Consortium members will cooperate to develop the COS and will evaluate a variety of promising technologies from diverse industry sources that are candidates for satisfying COS requirements. This association defines a unique business model, as it will allow other select technology contributors, ranging from small developers to other large defense contractors, to provide "best of breed" algorithms and software to the COS.

"The COS represents a significant departure from the way we have traditionally developed information technology intensive defense systems," said Dr. Michael S. Francis, director of the J-UCAS program. "The business approach of creating this common solution that is separated from the development of air vehicles promises extraordinary advantages in cost, schedule and performance. The Consortium is the key to making the COS a reality."

The objective of the J-UCAS program is to develop, demonstrate and transition an affordable, lethal, survivable, and supportable unmanned combat air system to meet the

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operational needs of the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy. In 2004, DARPA awarded Northrop Grumman and Boeing, the program's air vehicle prime contractors, agreements to design, build and demonstrate full-scale, flight-worthy air vehicles and mission control elements and to integrate the COS into their respective air vehicles.

The J-UCAS program selected a third entity, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, to act as an Integrator/Broker among the two air vehicle prime contractors and the other technology contributors to help facilitate, coordinate and, if necessary, complete the development of the J-UCAS enterprise architecture and the COS.

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The J-UCAS program is a joint Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency/U.S. Air Force/U.S. Navy effort to demonstrate the technical feasibility, military utility, and the operational value of a networked system of high-performance, weaponized, unmanned air vehicles to effectively and affordably execute combat missions. The J-UCAS Common Operating System will allow unmanned aircraft systems to intra-operate with each other and with the Global Information Grid. The J-UCAS system-of-systems concept plans to demonstrate the military utility and the operational value of airpower in the 21st century combat environment. More information on the J-UCAS program can be found at <http://www.darpa.mil/j-ucas>.

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